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EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT (IN INDUSTRIAL PSYCHOLOGY BY B. VONHALLER GILMER AND OTHERS. NEW YORK, MCGRAW-HILL, 1966/ 228-253).

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THIS CHAPTER FROM A LARGER WORK ON INDUSTRIAL PSYCHOLOGY DISCUSSES LEADERSHIP STEREOTYPES AND CONCEPTIONS, EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE OF ACTUAL LEADERSHIP FUNCTIONS, THE SELECTION OF POTENTIAL EXECUTIVES, AND METHODS OF EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT. THE MAJOR PROBLEM OF LEADERSHIP IS TO CREATE SITUATIONS IN WHICH FOLLOWERS WILLINGLY ACCEPT THE LEADER AS THEIR AGENT IN COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR. HOWEVER, EXISTING SELECTION METHODS (INCLUDING SITUATIONAL TESTING), FORMAL JOB DESCRIPTIONS, AND SURVEYS OF THE DUTIES AND THE DIMENSIONS OF THE TYPICAL EXECUTIVE DO NOT NECESSARILY PROVIDE VALID MEASURES OF EFFECTIVE EXECUTIVE BEHAVIOR. MOREOVER, INDIVIDUAL LEADERSHIP MUST FIT THE TASK AND THE ENVIRONMENT. INTELLIGENCE, SELF CONFIDENCE, SOCIABILITY, PERSISTENCE, INITIATIVE, AMBITION, AND DOMINANCE ARE KEY PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES. THE PRIMARY ELEMENTS IN THE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OF POTENTIAL EXECUTIVES APPEAR TO BE WORK ASSIGNMENTS AND THE CANDIDATE'S IMMEDIATE SUPERIOR. (THE DOCUMENT INCLUDES SUGGESTED READINGS, EXAMPLES OF THE USE OF RESIDENTIAL AND OTHER UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS, AND A STRUCTURAL DIAGRAM OF THE INTRAORGANIZATIONAL CONFERENCE GROUP METHOD FOR TRAINING THROUGH ACTIVE DECISION MAKING.) THIS DOCUMENT IS CHAPTER 9 IN INDUSTRIAL PSYCHOLOGY, BY B. VONHALLER GILMER AND OTHERS. IT IS AVAILABLE FROM MCGRAW-HILL, NEW YORK. (LY)

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INDUSTRIAL PSYCHOLOGY

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Executive Leadership and Development

Thomas L. Hilton

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TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER."

Who is an executive? Defining the term is a difficult problem, as anyone will recognize who has ever tried to write a formal description for the job. One operational definition is that of the employee who identified executives as "the ones who are allowed to use the private company parking lot." Although this may provide an indication of a man's status in the organization, it is hardly a workable description of the executive's job. Some people view this leadership personality by saying, "He is the executive type; doesn't like to work." We will look at what some people think executives do and then present evidence that indicates what they actually do.

FUNCTIONS OF EXECUTIVES

There are those who picture the executive as a person who sits at a great walnut desk surrounded by telephones, masterminding the fate of his company and its employees. This mythical executive spends his day making split-second decisions and issuing directives, like a master puppeteer who decides what each act shall be and who shall do the performing.

Then there is the conception of the executive, a little more realistic, as the master expediter who is always on the go, never in his office. He has few, if any, scheduled routine responsibilities. If he were suddenly to leave for a six-month tour of Europe, his absence would scarcely be noticed, save by those members of the organization who were perceptive enough to observe that things were not running quite so smoothly as usual and that morale was suffering a little. In general, we might say that in the

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absence of this executive, communication would be more difficult, objectives not quite so clearly defined. In other words, the primary function of this second mythical person is to maintain a favorable environment for effective work by other people in the organization. This role requires that the executive be an expert in the motivation of human behavior to an almost impossible degree.

The Empirical View. The empirical version of the executive is quite different from those descriptions above. One group of psychologists [59] found through extensive interviews that executives spend their time on the following kinds of activities:

1 Inspection of the organization
2 Investigation and research
3 Planning
4 Preparation of procedures and methods
5 Coordination
6 Evaluation
7 Interpretation of plans and procedures
8 Supervision of technical operations
9 Personnel activities
10 Public relations
11 Professional consultation
12 Negotiations
13 Scheduling, routing, and dispatching
14 Technical and professional operations

These activities are somewhat like those found in organizational descriptions of executive functions, more realistic and less romantic than many popular views.

The origin of the written descriptions of executive functions stated in organization charters and manuals has been lost in antiquity. Many no doubt resulted from the laws, the military practices, the social customs, and even the tribal ways of early history. They have been modified and augmented over the years as the exigencies and opportunities of the changing industrial scene have demanded it. When a sales manager, for example, fails to function effectively within the company, his successor is likely to find a revised specification of his duties, responsibilities, and authority. But this does not mean that we can regard the accumulation of these operational procedures as the best guide for the executive.

Dimensions of Executive Functions. In a similar but more elaborate study Hemphill asked ninety-three business executives to describe their position in terms of 575 items of a questionnaire [30]. The executives indicated the extent to which activities such as "Adjust work schedules to meet emer-

gencies" were a part of their position. An analysis of their responses revealed ten separate factors underlying their responses:

1 *Providing staff service in nonoperational areas.* (Some services falling in this category were gathering information, selecting employees, and briefing supervisors.) The six executives who measured highest on this dimension held the following positions: corporation secretary, engineer of outside plant, assistant treasurer, assistant general purchasing agent, director of personnel services, and supervisor of division of employment.

2 *Supervision of work.* (Includes planning, organizing, and controlling the work of others.) The positions measuring high on this dimension tended to be at the middle-management level or below. Supervision of work did not appear to be characteristic of the highest management positions.

3 *Business control, including cost reduction, preparation of budgets, determination of goals, and enforcement of regulations.* High on this dimension were budget administrators, plant managers, and general sales managers.

4 *Technical concern with products and markets.* Positions high on this dimension tended to be concerned with high-level selling or research engineering.

5 *Concern with human, community, and social affairs, including company good will, promotions, and selection of managers.* High-level sales positions were most frequently found on this dimension.

6 *Long-range planning.* Executives who measured high on this dimension tended not to get involved in the routines or details of day-to-day operations.

7 *Exercise of broad power and authority.* The positions which measured high on this dimension tended to be in upper-management categories such as division management and general sales management.

8 *Concern with company reputation.* Two broad areas of concern were included in this factor—product quality and public relations. The executives best described by this dimension were those who had general responsibility for the company's products or services.

9 *Concern with personal status.* Executives with high scores on this dimension were those who indicated that activities such as gaining the respect of very important persons and refraining from activities which might imply sympathy with unions were important to their position. They tended to be less concerned with maintaining the general reputation of their companies, very likely because their duties seldom brought them into contact with the public, judging from the titles of their positions.

10 *Preservation of company assets.* Executives holding positions high on this dimension were concerned about capital expenditures and large operating expenses and taxes, and they tended not to be involved with activities such as industrial relations or technical operations.

Obviously some positions will have attributes not included in these dimensions, and also the characteristics of a particular executive position will change from time to time.

Hemphill also observed that executives in different companies and at

different management levels tended to describe their positions in highly similar ways but that positions in different functional areas tended to be somewhat less similar.

There remain two other conceptions of the executive—the conception which is prescribed by company charters and the conception resulting from theoretical analyses of the position. The first ordinarily consists of a description of responsibilities and duties. These are stated in much the same way as they are stated in the constitution or manuals of nonbusiness organizations like the parent-teacher association and student extracurricular activities. In addition, within every company there are unwritten expectations about the functions the executives should fulfill. These are transmitted to new executives verbally or by the process of imitation, senior executives serving as models for the younger or newer executives. With the high mobility of the contemporary executive there is now probably less tendency for companies to rely on informal, unwritten communication of executive duties and responsibilities.

Theoretical Versions. Written statements of executive-job descriptions and questionnaire results are necessary and helpful to officers, but it is equally clear that they are not necessarily valid prescriptions of efficient executive behavior. We cannot be sure that rules which have resulted from the needs which organizations have experienced in the past are applicable to twentieth-century organizations. A science of administrative behavior is required, one which will provide a framework of propositions by means of which we can test the validity of different conceptions of the role of the executive. Whether it is good to have a given executive spend 15 per cent of his time engaged in public relations activity can only be ascertained by considering the totality of functions which the executive should perform in the organizations. For some executives, in some situations, a 15 per cent bracket of time devoted to public relations may be highly effective, but for another executive, another company, or even another time, it may be a gross misapplication of effort. Important advances in a science of administration have been made, but we are still far from the goal of a science which enables us to answer many practical questions.

One writer on scientific management [5] defines an organization as "a system of consciously coordinated personal activities or forces of two or more persons." This definition brings out three vital elements of an organization—willingness to serve, common purpose, and communication. According to this theoretical conception, the executive must work to secure the willing performance of essential services from individuals and to define the purposes, objectives, and ends of the organization. Furthermore, it becomes the job of executives to develop and maintain the system of communication by selecting men carefully and offering them incentives to do

the job. In other words, executives must provide techniques of control permitting effectiveness in promoting, demoting, and dismissing men, and they must understand the importance of the informal organizations within a company in which the essential property is compatibility of personnel.

These are functions of the executive organization, not the functions of any one man. In effect, it is the entire executive organization "that formulates, redefines, breaks into details, and decides on the innumerable simultaneous and progressive actions" of the company.

The Standards of Successful Leadership. Having pictured the difficulty of describing the functions of an executive, let us now raise some other provoking questions. Can successful leadership be attributed to a man? To the situation? To a combination of the two? What kind of man is successful as a leader? Are leaders born? Can leaders be developed?

What evidence do we have that may help us answer these questions?

The success of an executive can only be evaluated *in terms of some criterion.* It is in the light of the functions an executive is called upon to perform that we examine industrial leadership. As we have seen, only a beginning has been made in conceptualizing executive functions; only now are researchers beginning to assemble data with which organizational propositions can be tested.

THE CRITERIA OF SUCCESS

Since we cannot unequivocally specify the proper functions of an executive and, in addition, would be hard put to obtain valid measures of the extent to which any one executive fulfills these functions, we make some inferences. One line of reasoning runs like this: (1) By objective standards organization X is highly successful. (2) Mr. Y is the executive of organization X. (3) Therefore, Mr. Y is a good executive. For example, let organization X be the production department of a paper mill. Mr Y is the department head. It is observed that the net manufacturing cost per ton of paper produced in Mr. Y's department is less than that produced in any paper-production department known. On these grounds, it is concluded that Mr. Y is a good executive.

Some Faulty Reasoning. In the foregoing example both the logic of the deduction and the validity of the premises are faulty. The argument implies that organizational success results only from executive functions and that Mr. Y is the sole source of executive functions: obviously, we cannot accept these statements as logically valid.

Furthermore, net manufacturing cost per unit is not necessarily an adequate measure of the success of the manufacturing organization. We would

want to be sure, for one thing, that the cost included all depletion of resources, including human resources, particularly the resources of the executive himself. In other words, low costs may have been achieved by making such demands on the personnel and rewarding them so little—monetarily and otherwise—that in the next time period, productivity will ebb markedly. Or the executive in question may have achieved a high level of performance at the cost of his own physical and psychic well-being.

The Problem of Delayed Effects. Again, we would want to ask whether organizational success results only from executive functions. In a broad way it does. For example, it can be argued that if production is costly because of defective raw materials or incompetent employees or obsolete facilities, then the executive has failed in so far as it is a responsibility of the executive to obtain these resources. But it is clear that the matter may well be beyond the control of any one executive. In the paper industry, for instance, a year of low rainfall can lower water levels to the point that cheap power is no longer available. Surely an executive cannot be held responsible for the external environment (rainfall, for instance) except in those cases where he can be expected to anticipate changes or to take steps ensuring his organization against unpredictable external factors.

In the long run, a chief executive probably can be held responsible for provision of adequate resources. But what is the length of this time period? This question introduces one of the most perplexing problems encountered in human performance evaluations, the problem of delayed effects.

Salary as a Criterion. Some other indirect measures of executive success are even less defensible. The salary received by an executive frequently has been used as a measure of his effectiveness. This measure can be regarded as a combination of several variables: (1) the worth of the executive as perceived by his superiors, (2) the supply of and demand for similar executive performance within the industry, (3) the ability of the organization to provide incentives, (4) the policy of the organization in regard to executive compensation, and (5) the value the executive places on nonmonetary rewards.

Who knows by what criteria an executive's superiors evaluate his worth? And even if we assume that the superiors do validly appraise his effectiveness, we also have to assume that the other factors mentioned do not influence the executive's salary. As a matter of policy in most organizations, length of service or age is an important determinant of salary. Consequently, in studies of effectiveness which use salary as a criterion, a minimum requirement is that some control or adjustment for age or length of service be made.

Studies of executive success usually employ *ratings* of the executive as

criteria. The rating is done by the executive's superiors, by his associates, by subordinates, or by noncompany observers. The ratings vary from global judgments of overall effectiveness to mere checking of whether the executive performs certain actions or not. The global judgments obviously are subject to the dangers already mentioned. At their best they represent a valid appraisal of the extent to which the executive fulfills the rater's conception of what a good executive is, and thereby they usually tell us more about the rater's conception than about the executive himself. At their worst, they provide an unreliable indication of whether the rater wishes to present the executive in a favorable or unfavorable light for one or another irrelevant reason—personal friendship, animosity, hero worship, paternalism, sycophancy, to name a few.

Clinical Evidences. In spite of our problems with the criteria of successful executive leadership, there have been some studies of the correlates of success. These provide us with some appealing hypotheses in regard to the attributes of successful executives.

In a clinical study of 100 business executives extensive personal data were obtained. Analysis of the data attempted to identify a personality pattern which was common to all the successful executives. These were the executives who had a history of continuous promotion, who were regarded by their superiors as still promotable, and who were at the time in positions of major responsibility and were earning salaries within the upper ranges of the then current business salaries. Executive effectiveness was defined, therefore, primarily in terms of the perceptions and preconceptions of the executives' superiors [32].

The attributes of the successful executives were perceived to be the following:

1 High drive and achievement desire.

2 Strong mobility drives, a need to advance and to accumulate "the rewards of increased accomplishment."

3 A perception of superiors as "controlling but helpful," not as "prohibiting and destructive."

4 High "ability to organize unstructured situations and to see the implications of their organizations." Their time orientation is to the future.

5 Decisiveness—the "ability to come to a decision among several alternative courses of action." It is proposed that the loss of this trait is "one of the most disastrous for the executive; his superiors become apprehensive about him."

6 Strong self-structure. They are able to resist pressure from other people and have high faith in themselves.

7 Active, aggressive striving. The aggression is not necessarily overt, nor is the constant activity physical, for they are mentally active as well.

8 Apprehension and fear of failing.

9 A strong reality orientation. "They are directly interested in the practical,

the immediate, and the direct." If sense of reality is too strong, the executive may be handicapped.

10 Identification with superiors and detachment from subordinates. But the successful executive may be sympathetic with many subordinates.

11 Emotional independence from parents but no resentment toward them.

12 Loyalty to overall goals of the company rather than complete concentration on the self.

The author concludes that the successful executive "represents a crystallization of many of the attitudes and values generally accepted by middle-class American society." But, he points out, "he pays for his virtues in uncertainty and fear."

Cultural Patterns and Managerial Talent. Before World War II industrial psychology was largely concerned with the men and women who labor in the factory or keep the books in the office. Since the war there has been a surge of interest in the study of the men who manage, and as a corollary researchers have begun the important task of studying managerial cultural patterns. Haire et al. [28], in an elaborate study of the motivation, goals, and attitudes of over three thousand managers from fourteen countries, found that manager's attitudes toward management in different countries followed a pattern more closely associated with cultural variation than with degree of industrialization, which has frequently been thought of as a determinant of attitudes. For example, managers from Spain and Italy tended to agree more in attitudes toward management, despite their dissimilarity in degree of industrialization, than did managers from Italy and Denmark, where degrees of industrialization are more similar. The goals of Japanese and Norwegian managers are not precisely the same, nor are those of Indian and Italian managers. Nevertheless, these studies found a high degree of unanimity among managers in all countries and at all levels of management. More than anything else managers want the opportunity to use their talents to the utmost in their work, to act independently, to realize themselves as individuals. Self-realization and autonomy universally are more important to managers than prestige, social satisfaction, and even security.

Many studies have pointed to intelligence as a characteristic of successful managers. Harrell [29] found, for example, that the average intelligence-test scores of those who hold positions in the upper and middle levels of management is very high, reported to exceed the scores of about 96 per cent of the population. Ghiselli [23] also found the executive's average score to fall at the 96th percentile. But within this group a critical intellectual level is reached where the careers of those earning the very highest scores were not as successful as the careers of those who earned somewhat lower scores. Individuals who fall among the top 2 or 3 per cent of the

population in intelligence are somewhat less likely to be successful managers than those immediately below them. It is possible that those individuals at the very extreme high levels of capacity to deal with abstract ideas and concepts do not find in managerial activities the intellectual challenge they need. They may even see too many alternatives in decision making to come to practical conclusions in time to meet problems. Concludes Ghiselli about managerial talent:

> The talented manager is one who is well endowed intellectually, gifted with the capacity to direct the efforts of others, self-stimulated to action, confident in his activities, and striving for a position where he can most fully utilize them —this picture of managerial talent very likely does not well describe the scientist, the physician, nor the politician.

The above studies found also that at the upper two levels of management there is a positive relationship between initiative and job performance. The greater the individual's capacity for initiative, the more likely he is to be judged as being a good manager. On the other hand, at the lower levels of management and with line jobs there is less relation. While initiative may be rewarded at the higher levels of management, at the lower levels it may even be punished.

Executives versus Supervisors. In another study fifty executives were compared with fifty lower-level supervisors of the same age and occupational history. The authors concluded:

> The executive considers mobility to upper levels essential for success, since his need for esteem and feelings of personal accomplishment can be satisfied *only* by securing a high position. The supervisor, on the other hand, has a much lower level of aspiration and less mobility drive and considers success achieved when he has attained personal and family security, respect, and happiness [52].

Although we are far from being able to spell out with any high degree of confidence the attributes of a successful executive, additional insights can be gained from the studies of leadership in general, by piecing together the accumulated wisdom of those who have worked closely with executives, and from executives themselves. Let us continue by taking a look not only at the individual as a leader but also at the environment which helps make leadership possible.

INDIVIDUAL LEADERSHIP AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Interest in studying the behavior of people in groups began prior to World War II and gained momentum during the war as problems of leadership

and communication became vitally important. The researches inspired by Lewin brought new emphasis to an old problem—essentially the point of view that the behavior of a person at any given moment is a function of his individual characteristics and his psychological environment [42, 43].

Individual Differences. The individual characteristics which Lewin had in mind were not traits in the sense of observable uniformities in the overt behavior of individuals, but rather the momentary state of the needs of the person. He argued that the fact that the observable behavior of two people is similar is by no means proof that their individual characteristics are the same. Two people behaving aggressively may be doing so for entirely different reasons. One may have a pressing acquired need to do harm to the lives of other people, and the situation which we observe is perceived by this person as an opportunity to satisfy his aggressive need. The people or objects against which he aggresses are means to an end in the same way that food is a means to a hungry man.

The strongest momentary need of the second person may be a need for autonomy, a need to be left alone. He acts aggressively toward the people in the given situation because he sees them as insurmountable barriers to his achieving his independence. He may be mild-mannered and kind in other situations; here his frustration manifests itself in belligerent acts against the agents of his frustration. Note that the physical environment of the two men is identical but each perceives it quite differently.

Leadership Stereotypes. American efforts to predict human behavior have been dominated by an emphasis on traits and abilities, something of a carry-over from the beginning days of industrial psychology. For instance, several efforts to predict leadership skill have focused on the physical trait of height. To this day there is a popular stereotype of the leader as a tall man. For example, a recent construction job in downtown Pittsburgh was observed to have three different observation windows cut in the tall wooden guard wall along the sidewalk. The lowest window was labeled "Junior Superintendent," a higher window "Assistant Superintendent," and the highest window "General Superintendent."

The evidence for this stereotype is contradictory. Although some studies have found height to be correlated with leadership, other studies have produced negative results. These findings are not surprising. For some groups in certain environments with certain tasks, tall men are perceived by the group as more able to serve its goals; for other groups in different situations they are not. The crucial determinant of successful leadership is not the trait make-up of the leader, but the needs of the members of the group and the nature of the situation in which the potential leader and his potential followers find themselves.

Situations and Leadership. In the furnace room of a steel foundry, a burly, aggressive, outspoken foreman may provide highly successful leadership, but his traits are not likely to further the cooperative goals of, say, a group of physicians. After an extensive survey of personal factors associated with leadership, one investigator has come to this conclusion: "Leadership is a relation that exists between persons in a social situation, and . . . persons who are leaders in one situation may not necessarily be leaders in other situations." [63]

Despite the convincing theory and evidence in support of a situational theory of leadership, many investigations have proved that certain personality variables do differentiate between leaders and nonleaders. Intelligence, for instance, is almost always found to be higher among leaders than among nonleaders. Likewise, such traits as self-confidence, sociability, will (initiative, persistence, ambition), and dominance are generally found to be significantly different.

Do these findings of the researchers who have studied personality variables serve to refute the situational theory of leadership? In one sense they do, for the personality variables mentioned seem to be common to many leaders. On the other hand, it can be argued that there are problems which are common to all situations and that these common problems uniformly require the same characteristics of leadership for their solution. For instance, all group activity has a purpose. This is true by definition; a collection of individuals without a common purpose is just that—a collection of individuals, not a group. It seems likely that the group will appoint or otherwise accept a leader who is superior in those activities, including intellectual activity, which are required for the fulfillment of its purpose.

Social Interaction. A leader ordinarily must have some social interaction with the group or at least some social proximity to it. The more sociable a man is relative to the sociability of the other members of the group, the more likely he is to become the leader. Similar arguments can be proposed for the other personality variables. It is conceivable, however, that exceptions to the usual situations will be found. For instance, it is not overly difficult to imagine a group and a situation in which successful leadership will require a low level of intelligence on the part of the leader. Nevertheless, for practical purposes, we can accept the personality variables mentioned as likely to be found in leaders, provided we are always mindful that group needs and the nature of the situation are the primary variables.

Some Generalizations on Leadership. Psychologists interested in industrial leadership problems have drawn several useful conclusions for industrial consumption:

1 The major problem of leadership is not one of providing inspiration and achieving obedience, but one of creating a situation in which the followers willingly accept the leader as their agent in cooperative endeavor.

2 The major determinant of behavior is how a person perceives the need-fulfilling possibilities of the immediate situation. Achieving changes in the behavior of employees, for instance, is primarily a matter of achieving a change in their perception of the immediate situation.

3 Authority which is maintained by threats of punishment is clearly undesirable; it achieves only acquiescence, not voluntary acceptance.

4 Employees are more likely to accept group or organizational goals as their own when they have personally participated in setting up these goals.

5 The security, support, and, sometimes, anonymity which participating in a group provides, as well as the pressure which group members exert on each other, make groups unusually effective instruments for achieving change.

6 Communication among a number of people is greatest when they face each other as members of one group, provided that the group leader permits free interaction; groups themselves, then, provide the best way to disseminate information, opinion, and ideas.

It is important to recognize that typically the industrial executive is not in the same position as the leader of a small group. A basic distinction which must be considered is the difference between leadership and headship. The executive in the business organization receives his authority from the organization itself. He is appointed from above. By his control of sanctions and incentives he has the power to achieve obedience. In addition, his goals as a leader are not necessarily compatible with the goals of his employees. The group leader, on the other hand, maintains his leadership by virtue of the "spontaneous recognition" of fellow group members when he contributes to group goals. Here the goals are chosen by the group itself.

Fiedler [18], after an eleven-year study of leadership, concludes that *time* is an important dimension in the effectiveness of different leadership methods. When the organization is running well, authoritarian leadership may be quite effective. In essence, there are virtually no problems, and people may be willing to have little to say. Likewise, in times of crisis decisions must be forthcoming, and people expect autocratic decisions. However, in times of change which emerges gradually from growth, people want to be involved. Here permissive leadership proves more effective.

Leadership Methods. The behavior which a leader evokes depends somewhat on his leadership methods. Knickerbocker [40] has proposed that

there are four methods a leader may use for directing the activities of people:

1 *Force.* The leader uses his control of means to force the choice of certain activities which he desires as means. The alternative to following him is reduction of need satisfaction.

2 *Paternalism.* The leader provides means and hopes for acceptance of his leadership out of loyalty and gratitude.

3 *Bargain.* The leader may arrive at a bargain, a more or less voluntary choice made by each party to furnish certain means in return for certain means.

4 *Mutual means.* The leader creates the situation in which certain activities of his and of the group, if performed together, will serve as mutual means, means for all to satisfy their own (perhaps different) needs.

Knickerbocker says that the present-day leader is in a dilemma, since "he must succeed as a leader despite the fact that he cannot control the conditions in terms of which he leads." But he believes that "when management successfully creates the necessary conditions, the organization and its objective become a means not only to management but also to labor." In other words, here is expressed the belief that the industrial leader can become the kind of leader that theory and research in group psychology suggest would be highly effective. Our conclusion can only be that this remains to be seen; at present the industrial leader typically is in quite a different position from the small-group leader, and great caution must be exercised in applying the principles of small-group leadership to industrial leadership.

Some of the fads, such as brainstorming, which have come into widespread use in dealing with the dilemmas of leadership have been found wanting. Studies show that brainstorming does not constitute an efficient way of capitalizing on the intellectual resources of different individuals. Once the exact nature of the problem has been defined, possibly in a brief meeting, individual problem solving is better. Dunnette et al. [16] found, for example, that the mean number of ideas produced by advertising personnel groups of four people thinking as individuals was 141; the corresponding mean number of ideas produced by the groups brainstorming as groups was only 97. Holding a brief conference for the purpose of summarizing the results of the problem-solving efforts and communicating the final decision may be far more valuable than brainstorming without structure. One may wonder how often a quickie "think" conference is called just because the boss is lonesome.

A COMPOSITE PICTURE

We have seen that the functioning executive is a complex person in a complex situation. To date there exists no means by which his behavior can be

accurately predicted or his effectiveness evaluated. The integration of the myriad of personality, situational, organizational, social, and economic variables still is best performed by the experienced human observer. Melvin Anshen [2], long experienced in the study of executive behavior, has this to say:

> Even in a world of incomplete knowledge, we can develop reasonable projections of characteristics which will be useful to strengthen in the next management generation. The following list is offered simply as one man's suggestions, subject to any amendments each one of you may care to add.
>
> **1** Knowledge of the technical aspects of the business—as a basis for understanding their meaning in relation to the making and executing of policy.
>
> **2** Understanding of the relationships among the functional parts of the business—as a basis for thinking beyond departmental limits.
>
> **3** Understanding of the environment in which the business is carried on: economic, social, and political; special emphasis attaches to a grasp of the causes and significance of change.
>
> **4** An imaginative approach to management problems, particularly with respect to the ability to think beyond the routines of normal operation both in defining problems and in exploring alternative lines of solution.
>
> **5** Courage in making decisions—and equal courage in refusing to make decisions when the time is not ripe, or when decisions should be made by others as part of their own exercise of delegated responsibility.
>
> **6** Understanding of the tools of administration and control, and skill in using them to get results.
>
> **7** Ability to work with and through other people, individually and in groups: to stimulate their best efforts and to win and hold their confidence and loyalty.
>
> **8** Ability to encourage the development of subordinates: to delegate responsibility, to coach effectively, and to provide challenge for growing ability.
>
> **9** Power for continuing personal growth in performance and capacity.

Self-evaluation and Leadership. In the book *Executive Ability: Its Discovery and Development,* Cleeton and Mason [11] point out the importance of self-evaluation of one's behavior as he exercises responsibility for the efforts of others, makes decisions on questions of policy and practice, and sees that the decisions are carried out. Executive ability is not an all-or-none quality. It is important to recognize that varying degrees of executive ability are required in the large variety of positions involving administrative and supervisory responsibility.

An unusual kind of evaluative summary of the responsibilities of the leader was given by an industrial psychologist in his farewell presidential message to the faculty, alumni, and friends of Antioch College:

> It will require time to think back over the many events that have been crowded into these few years and to draw a proper meaning from them. How-

ever, two related convictions have developed slowly but steadily out of this experience.

The first is a conviction which has been derived from my personal struggle with the role of college president. Before coming to Antioch I had observed and worked with top executives as an advisor in a number of organizations. I thought I knew how they felt about their responsibilities and what led them to behave as they did. I even thought that I could create a role for myself which would enable me to avoid some of the difficulties they encountered.

I was wrong! It took the direct experience of becoming a line executive and meeting personally the problems involved to teach me what no amount of observation of other people could have taught.

I believed, for example, that a leader could operate successfully as a kind of advisor to his organization. I thought I could avoid being a "boss." Unconsciously, I suspect, I hoped to duck the unpleasant necessity of making difficult decisions, of taking the responsibility for one course of action among many uncertain alternatives, of making mistakes and taking the consequences. I thought that maybe I could operate so that everyone would like me—that "good human relations" would eliminate all discord and disagreement.

I couldn't have been more wrong. It took a couple of years, but I finally began to realize that a leader cannot avoid the exercise of authority any more than he can avoid responsibility for what happens to his organization. In fact, it is a major function of the top executive to take on his own shoulders the responsibility for resolving the uncertainties that are always involved in important decisions. Moreover, since no important decision ever pleases everyone in the organization, he must also absorb the displeasure, and sometimes severe hostility, of those who would have taken a different course.

A colleague recently summed up what my experience has taught me in these words: "A good leader must be tough enough to win a fight, but not tough enough to kick a man when he is down." This notion is not in the least inconsistent with humane, democratic leadership. Good human relations develop out of strength, not of weakness.

I'm still trying to understand and practice what is implied in my colleague's statement.*

THE SELECTION OF POTENTIAL EXECUTIVES

In view of our paucity of knowledge in regard to the functions and attributes of executives, there appears to be little that can be said with certainty as to which men should be selected as executives. At best, executive selection is, at present, educated guesswork. The research that has been conducted on executive selection suggests some possible profitable

* Reproduced with the permission of the late Dr. Douglas McGregor, formerly president of Antioch College.

variables for which to look. The leadership research likewise provides some hints in regard to the personal attributes which may contribute to successful executive performance. Recent reviews on administrative judgment, research needs in executive selection, and the criteria of executive success indicate there is now a widespread interest in the problem. Observations from experienced observers offer additional cues [31, 35, 60, 69].

Some Major Assumptions. However we slice our problem, selection is still guesswork when the problem is one of selecting young men who are likely to develop into executives ten or more years from now. Knowing the attributes of today's successful executives is of particularly questionable value, since it involves at least the assumption that today's executives have been properly selected, i.e., that today's executives are performing more effectively than other men who might have been selected for their positions. It is conceivable that our present beliefs and stereotypes are resulting in the wrong men being appointed to executive positions, particularly since, as described earlier, we do not fully understand executive functions. Contemporary successful executives may not be as successful as others who might have been selected. Two writers [41] have predicted that by 1980 the requirements of the executive may be radically different from the requirements of today. Computers may well take over some decision-making functions of the executive; they may even reduce the status of the man in middle management to that of a clerk.

Situational Testing. Aside from, or in addition to, the conventional procedures of personnel selection described in Chapter 6, one method of selecting potential executives is situational testing, first used extensively by the Office of Strategic Services during World War II. The first objective of this technique is to envision the kind of problem situations which the executives of the future will be likely to encounter in fulfilling executive functions, e.g., marketing, planning, labor, public relations problems. Next, replicas of these problem situations are devised in the testing center. A large staff, which may even include professional actors, a communications system, and any other equipment needed to simulate operating conditions are required.

The candidates are given "real" problems, which often involve a task to be accomplished with only limited resources. For instance, they are sometimes given a group of "workers" to assist them, but the workers are instructed to obstruct progress as much as possible. The reactions of the candidate—how he handles the "incompetent" workers, how he reacts to frustration, and whether he is able to get the job done—are meticulously observed and recorded [50].

The In-basket Test. A modification of the situational testing technique which has proved useful in management training programs shows some promise as a selection device [20, 21].

The examinee is asked to sit at a desk on which there is an in-basket filled with whatever might typically be found in the in-basket of the administrator in the position for which candidates are being selected. Included may be important memoranda requiring immediate action, routine daily reports requiring no action, and social items (e.g., office trivia, an invitation to play golf). Some of the items can be ignored; others contain significant information about the psychological climate of the setting. The examinee is instructed to go through the items as if he were on the job, handling them by referring, delegating, planning meetings, and in general exercising control and leadership; and he is told that everything he decides or does must be in writing. Whatever memoranda, reminders, or letters he writes become his answers to the test items. A folder of information is given the examinee describing the organization, its structure, history, personnel, and function.

At the end of the allotted time (usually two to three hours) the examinee is given a reasons-for-action form which provides him with the opportunity to express more clearly how he perceived each item and why he took the action he did.

The scoring of the in-basket test, which requires specially trained personnel, produces three types of scores. In the first, the content of the examinee's responses is considered with a view to how many times the examinee makes a "correct" response, or a response exhibiting qualitative characteristics such as decisiveness or imaginativeness. In the second, the focus is on examinee's style, e.g., whether he is courteous to subordinates. In the third, judgments are made about how well the examinee does on the overall task.

Situational testing would still involve the assumption that those men who perform best in the test situation will perform best under actual control-operating conditions, say, ten years later. The validity of this assumption can only be tested by longitudinal investigations. The present need for this kind of investigation is great.

If situational testing is desirable, why not expose candidates to actual operating conditions rather than to costly simulated test situations? Why not let each candidate work for the company for a trial period during which his performance would be carefully observed?

Despite the advantages of this trial-by-fire type of selection, it is questionable whether adequate test conditions can be created on the job. Good selection requires a broad range of test situations and ample opportunity to obtain valid observational data. These conditions are seldom attainable under operating conditions. In addition, an intensive situational testing

program lasting, say, two or three days, allows companies to select the successful candidates without any obligation to provide employment for the unsuccessful candidate.

Whether or not we have valid ways of picking the people we wish to groom for executive positions, industry still has to pick somebody. One way or another a man has to be selected as a potential executive. The word "potential" is important because, except for the small minority of experienced administrators who enter companies as higher-level executives, most executives develop within the companies they serve. For example, 90 per cent of 900 top executives studied by *Fortune Magazine* had been with their companies ten or more years. A survey of 1,000 top officials of major United States industrial companies by *Scientific American* says few managers come to the top directly from other firms. Around the age of 50 the executive is promoted to a vice-presidency, becoming the chief executive as he approaches 60 years of age.

EXECUTIVE–DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

Types of Practices. Current practices in executive development vary from complete laissez faire to highly organized systematic training. The former involves no formal efforts on the part of the company. Potential candidates merely mature in the company, picking up from their day-to-day experiences what skills they can. At the other extreme, the early years a potential candidate spends with the company consist of continuous training. His positions are carefully chosen to provide him with the experience he will require as an executive. He is transferred from time to time to provide him with a broad range of experience in all aspects of the company's operations. There are frequent conferences, during the working day and evenings, at which he has the opportunity to learn new skills (often human relations skills), to learn about new technical developments, and to make up for any deficiencies in his educational background. He is asked to attend week-long training sessions and may even be encouraged to attend formal programs given in various schools of business. Even his wife may be given the opportunity to acquire the social skills she will need. He will receive regular reports on his progress and hold extensive discussions with regard to his shortcomings. In some instances, even the services of a clinic will be available to him if personal psychotherapy is necessary.

Whether such an extensive program is justified is, of course, difficult if not impossible to ascertain. The first question is whether the product of such a system is in actuality a more qualified man than the product of a laissez-faire system.

A rigorously controlled study of the value of executive training has, however, never been conducted. There is some reason for this; the situation is

like that encountered in mental-health research. To validly test the efficiency of a new method or new mental-health program requires that a comparable control sample be excluded from participating in the new program. But if you are confident that the new program will be highly beneficial, what right have you to deprive a sample of its benefit, particularly if they earnestly seek the benefit? And what effect will the mere act of being deprived have on the control sample? In addition, how do you hold all other things equal, particularly in an industrial setting? As was learned in the Hawthorne experiment, you cannot manipulate the experimental group without influencing the control group. Also there is the problem of criteria. Just how does one measure the value of a training program? Although we do not have an answer to this question, a lot of industrial organizations seem to think their training programs are worth the money they cost.

Educational Programs for Executives. Educational programs for executives have expanded rapidly until at the present time some 250,000 executives go back to school each year. There are three main ways in which the various programs have been run. First, university schools of business have instituted programs that run for periods of about ten weeks during which the executives come and live on the campus. They are taught by the regular faculties and hear lectures by outside experts. Second, there are the company-run institutes, such as the one conducted by General Electric at its own educational center. Here top executives from every G.E. division live together for thirteen weeks; they attend classes together, have their meals together, and sleep in a dormitory. They hear lectures on subjects ranging from geopolitics to economics; they also work on individual projects. Some of the faculty are company executives, and some are brought in from university faculties. Most companies with such programs design their curricula around courses closely related to their particular business.

Third, the American Management Association, along with a number of other management training associations, maintains programs for companies that are too small to run their own show. The training programs last anywhere from five days to several weeks.

In general, these programs cover studies in management principles, the nature of organizations, planning and controlling, and appraisal of operational performance. Some programs set up problem-solving situations where teams of executive students compete in such areas as making decisions on awarding advertising contracts, problems in promotion, and merit rating. Most of the programs include courses or workshops in human relations.

Programs and Personal Adjustment. Somewhat unique have been the studies of experienced executives who have attended university programs. Since the

Harvard Business School initiated the idea in the late 1940s, several thousand executives have participated in some fifty programs sponsored by universities and colleges. Most programs give focus to middle management. Gorsuch [27] and Chowdhry [9, 10] report on studies of the personality and motivational factors of the participants. Many of the men said they had been traveling at such a fast pace that they had given little time to personal planning or cultural pursuits. Some on follow-up reported that on returning to the job they changed their leisure-time habits and basic living plans. One factor reported over and over was that the increased self-confidence that was derived from successfully competing with their peers and the drive felt to improve things back on the job was dampened by "the same old climate." New perspective and novel ideas got lost in the routine of day-to-day activities.

Why did the men attend the program for executives? Answers to this question turned up an interesting finding in one study related to personal adjustment. Of twenty-nine executives who went through one program fifteen were there on their own initiative and fourteen had been sent. About half of the total group had backgrounds of some organizational stress, of being at a critical stage of their career and decision making, and of being involved in dilemmas having polarities. The other half had seemed committed to their professional roles, had backgrounds of success and a sense of achievement. These "unconflicted" executives had the characteristics of the upward-mobile person we described in an earlier chapter. They liked the organization and felt a strong part of it. The "conflicted" executives, most of whom were self-initiated, sought out the programs as a flight from stress and hoped to find ways to resolve their dilemmas and conflicts. These were men in a crucial stage of their careers now considering alternatives in their continuing career development.

Most of the executives selected and sent to the program by their company felt the selection was an indicator of success. These unconflicted men looked upon the program, not as an escape from stress, but as an opportunity to gain knowledge and acquire new managerial skills. Whether the executive uses the program as a psychosocial moratorium or as a platform to launch himself higher may indicate contrasting personality patterns in reacting to stress. Some tension-ridden executives dream of getting out of the race, while others thrive on it.

CONFERENCE GROUPS

Planned work assignments and informal on-the-job training are vital and irreplaceable types of training. Together they include informal instruction, work assignments carefully planned to provide varied and informative ex-

periences, continual observation, extensive opportunity to discuss problems encountered and progress made, and suggestions of ways in which the potential executive can improve himself by the assignment of reading and recommended professional activities.

An important additional type of training involves the structure and operation of the organization—namely, the use of conference groups. The conference method has been widely used in industry. A scheme for the permanent incorporation of conference groups into the organization in such a way that there can be *both formal and informal* communications between various groups has been proposed. This scheme shows how an organization can use its own structure to provide for continuous executive development. Let us include it here as an example of still another way of giving attention to training.

A diagram of organization structure for "optimal communication and perpetual executive training" is shown in Figure 9.1.

A feature of the proposal is the way in which horizontal communication between the groups is achieved by means of a junior-management group composed of selected junior members of the second-echelon groups. These men may be the most outstanding members of their groups, or they may be selected by systematic rotation, staggered to minimize disruption of group operation. This group makes recommendations only. (The other groups are responsible for policy at their level and recommend policy to higher levels.) Not only does the junior-management group provide for coordination between the departments at its own level, but as a result of its several perspectives on company problems it is able to provide original, perceptive suggestions to top management.

Conference groups provide the potential executive with knowledge of the problems and accomplishments of other departments and give him a broader point of view. By freely participating in the group, he learns to contribute to cooperative problem solving, to respect the opinions of his associates, and, frequently, to see the shortcomings and narrowness of his own point of view. In addition the trainee also learns to express himself cogently and confidently. In the course of analyzing problems he acquires relevant incidental information, on accounting techniques and labor relations, for example. Such a conference situation provides all the people concerned with an opportunity to get a global view of problems. Conference groups enable executives to observe their subordinates *actively engaged in management problem solving* and provide a source of valuable data on which to base recommendations for promotion.

We suggest that all conference groups be led in a permissive but controlled way; that is to say, let free discussion be encouraged, let no votes be taken, since the objective is to achieve unanimity—but let the leader maintain orderly discussion. The improvement of employee relations,

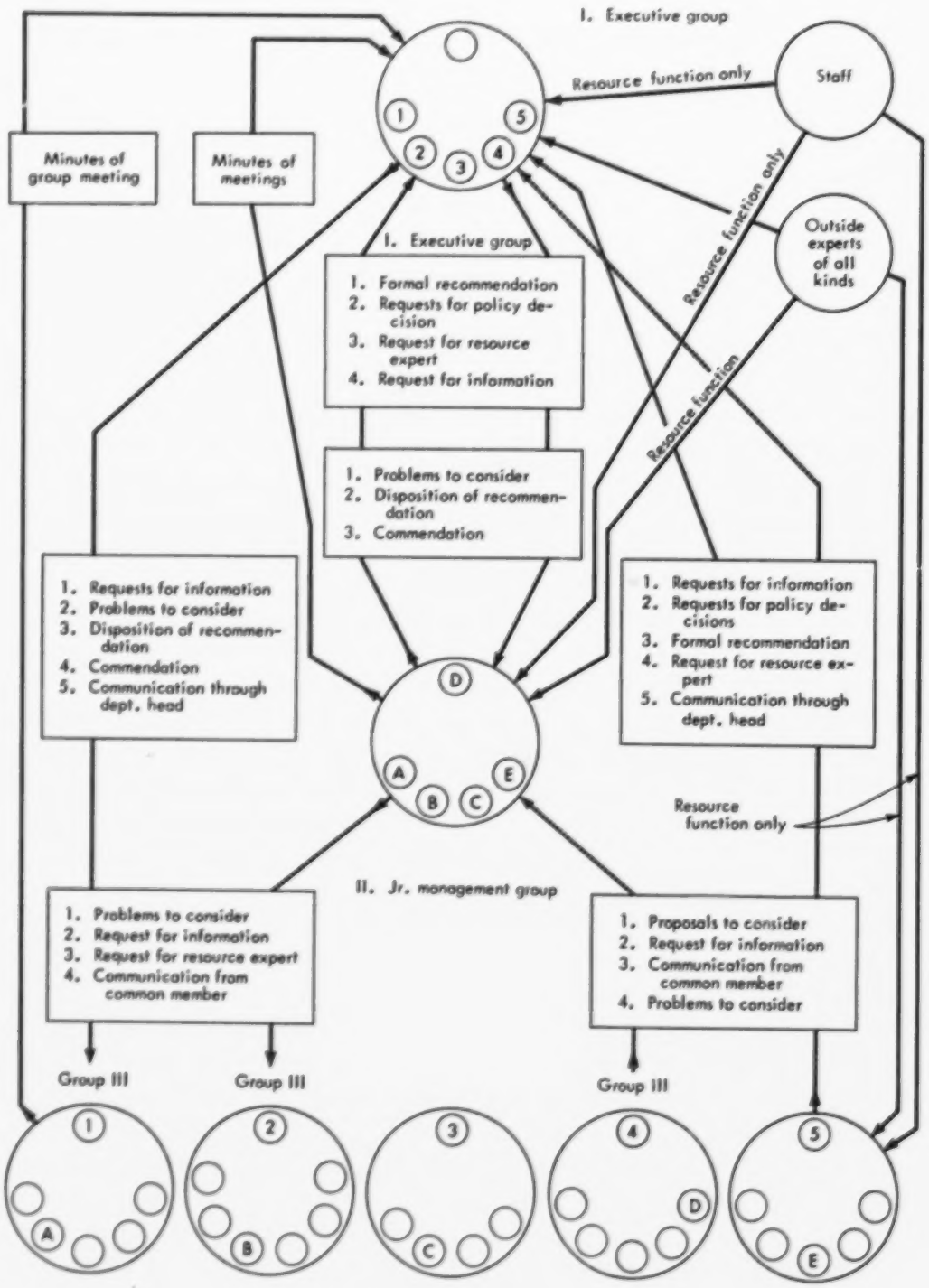

Fig. 9.1. This schematic diagram for organization structure of optimal communication and perpetual executive training shows how conference groups can be organized, providing for both formal and informal communications between executive, junior management, and department groups. Such schemes enable executives to observe their subordinates actively engaged in problem solving. (From Moyer, K. E. *Conference communication and executive development.* Mimeographed edition, 1959, 1–41.)

safety, and selection are suggested as initial topics of discussion. After the ice is broken, many other problems for discussion will flow to the groups.

SUCCESSFUL EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT

Currently, executive-development programs consist of planned work assignments, informal on-the-job training, including ideas for self-improvement, and organization aids to development, including formal training classes and conferences. Techniques usually employed incorporate formal lectures with or without visual aids, discussion groups, role playing, and problem solving. Experienced observers report that regardless of its methods and techniques of training, an executive-development program is good and meaningful only in proportion to the degree to which the company is committed to development in general.

If a training program is viewed as a segregated peripheral effort which need not be tied in with the long-term planning and development of the resources of the company, then it may well do more harm than good. What use is there in providing a group of young men with advanced skills and heightened aspirations if their new skills are neither appreciated nor needed and their new aspirations are likely to be frustrated?

The primary opportunity for the development and training of a potential executive is in the work assigned to him; how far he gets is up to him. The key man in his development is his immediate superior.

A superior who is mindful of the future needs of his subordinate and also the future needs of the organization can thoughtfully and systematically assign varied and significant tasks providing invaluable experience for the potential executive. It is important to note that this is not variety simply for the sake of variety. Each new assignment must be selected in the light of the developing needs of the candidate; i.e., it should build on previous experiences and prepare him for the next assignment. In addition, each new assignment must enable the candidate to use his growing skills productively. It is said that some companies rationalize assigning men to menial berths by saying that the different experience is good for them. If this is the only motivation for such assignments, then the practice is, of course, indefensible. On the other hand, it is possible that a sympathetic, penetrating analysis of a candidate's record might indicate that, in the case of this particular man, assignment to a menial task would provide a beneficial experience.

It is important to keep good records on the man being groomed for a higher position. A long-range effort such as this requires that a full description of the candidate's development be kept, including statements of the

reasons which motivated his assignments, summaries of experiences and skills acquired, and constructive evaluations of his performances.

It is likewise important that the motivation for development originate in the potential executive himself. The company can provide opportunities, aids, incentives, and, initially, direction. To be fully effective in the long run, however, the guidance of the development process should subtly shift, as time passes, from the organization to the individual. We shall discuss this more in the final chapter of this book.

Portrait of a Successful Executive. The successful executive is usually completely immersed in his work; he identifies himself totally with the organization. At the same time, however, there are many other demands on his time and energy. He is frequently called upon to participate in community work, and he probably has strong family ties. There is, therefore, almost inevitable conflict among his roles, resulting in cross pressures, frustrations, and feelings of guilt and self-incrimination.

The conflict is intensified by many factors. There are the ample monetary awards and status symbols with which the executive's services are purchased. There is, however, no specified contractual relationship between an executive's compensation and the number of hours he works. Surely most executives must feel an obligation to devote a supernormal amount of their time and energy to their work.

Long hours and hard work do not in themselves cause breakdowns. It is probably true, within limits, that hard work never killed anyone. It appears to be the conflict and consequent tension which results from these demands which exhaust an executive, as is the cause with many people in lesser positions.

Another problem is that many executives, particularly lower-level executives, are deprived of the security and support which a stable and settled community life provides. A transferral every two or three years obviously precludes the establishment of deep roots in the community. The frequently moving executive becomes adroit at establishing himself and his family quickly, but his ties are at the same time kept fluid and superficial.

As a consequence of the factors mentioned above, as well as other stresses in any executive's life, it is no wonder that so-called "executive breakdowns" are not infrequent. An executive does not have simpler, less pressing needs than a worker. In fact, his needs are no doubt more elaborate and intense than those of company employees who have less responsibility [3, 6, 15, 18, 36, 62].

Frequently, the executive is viewed as a tower of strength who can adapt to any situation, but he too can be discharged without warning, transferred to a distant office on a moment's notice, capriciously shuffled in the organization, expected to reject all noncompany interests, or humiliated

by his superior. It may be true that good executives can withstand all such strains; in fact, at present we tend to use the term "good executive" to define one who can withstand the strains. The question is, "Are these strains necessary and desirable?" The answer seems clear. Surely even the hardiest individuals are not as effective under these conditions as they would be otherwise. We need not, however, lose the services of those executives who cannot function effectively in such an environment. Let us add to the several skills stressed in executive-selection and -development programs one other: the skill of being able to practice good personal adjustments.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SELECTIVE READING

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